

THERE are some hopeful indications that the study of Art may once more reassert its power as a great moral and spiritual influence. Too long the tendency of modern artists and the aim of the academies has been simple reproduction of natural objects, and often objects destitute of anything elevating in themselves or their surroundings. All tendencies towards spiritualizing, or bringing into play the "shaping power of imagination," have been ruthlessly frowned upon. Realism gone mad seems to have dominated the studios and art schools, and even the Royal Academy. As Holman Hunt says, "Low life—a dog on a cat's meat cart—is all the Academy looks for from an artist, instead of encouraging historical painting and fine poetical and noble conceptions." Both in New York and in England there are indications of a revolt against the tyranny of petty and fashionable conventionalism and the academies which wield it. A demand is being made for a radical reform, and a proper recognition of good work by outside artists, of "art which is characterized by elevated aim and unconventional treatment."

UNDER the guidance of M. Goblet, the new Minister of Instruction, France is making some important innovations in its school system. The reaction which has already taken place in America, and to some extent in England, against giving undue prominence to the classical branches, has begun to set in in the French Republic. The Council of Public Instruction has prepared a new programme for the secondary schools, founded on the principle that the study of ancient languages and literature is best adapted for those who choose the higher professions, and that an acquaintance with scientific, commercial and industrial topics is better suited and more practically useful to lower and middle class pupils. Consequently modern languages are being substituted for Latin and Greek in the new programme. This innovation is cautiously introduced, and the liberty of choice amongst various courses of study still too narrow. But the wedge has been entered, and the intrinsic force of the new educational ideas will gradually press it home.

"ONE teacher looks at his pupils and sees nothing in their faces but an exhaustive demand on his strength and patience; another sees in each face a mute appeal to all the wisdom, sympathy, and love that are in him." So says the *Christian Union*. The words are fitly spoken. We commend them to the consideration of every teacher who reads the CANADA SCHOOL JOURNAL. Let each ask himself and herself, "What do I see in the faces of my pupils? To which class of teachers do I belong?" The answer will go far to enable one to determine whether he is a true teacher or no.

## TWO PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

IN our Question-Drawer a correspondent puts two questions which deserve serious consideration. If we were prepared to recommend resort to corporal punishment in mixed schools, under any circumstances, we should find it difficult to give any good reason why the teacher should discriminate in favor of girls. If the rod is used because absolutely necessary, the

necessity must sometimes apply to the gentler sex as well as to the other. Girls are not free from natural depravity any more than boys, and though the cases in which resort to the argument of physical pain is necessary, may be much more rare with the sisters than the brothers, no one can logically argue that they occur frequently in the case of the one sex and never in that of the other. If, again, corporal punishment is used as a means of moral good, it is manifestly unfair to the girls to deprive them of its elevating and refining influence.

DOES not the fact alluded to by our correspondent, and it is an undoubted fact that many teachers make the distinction in practice, suggest that the teacher himself shrinks from carrying his belief in the efficacy of the rod to its logical result? He either does not believe that it is indispensable, or salutary, or he shrinks from an unpleasant duty and convicts himself of partiality, unfaithfulness, and moral cowardice.

As to the second question, it seems to us to be the *reductio ad absurdum* of corporal punishment in schools. To flog the little boys and let the big ones go free seems unfair and cowardly. And yet there is a point beyond which the attempt to inflict corporal punishment becomes manifestly demoralizing. Fancy a struggle for the mastery before the school! We have heard of such things. When, as may often happen, the teacher is physically slight, and the boy big and robust, the thing may become not only absurd and demoralizing, but even dangerous. Where shall the line be drawn? When does a boy become too old to be flogged? Evidently no rule can be laid down, so much depends upon the physical powers of the teacher and of the boy.

FOR our own part, we have no faith in either the necessity or the moral efficacy of corporal punishment in schools. While the parent lives we do not believe any one else has a moral right to lift a rod against the child. Nature has implanted in the parental heart the feeling which alone can make such a punishment morally beneficial. Not one teacher in a hundred flogs a pupil in the only spirit which can make the punishment effectual for good. In the great majority of cases the child resents it as a wrong, as the tyranny of brute force. At the best, it appeals to the low motive of abject fear. At the worst, it stirs up hatred, evil passions, and a desire for revenge.

ONCE more: Is it not a personal degradation to the teacher to inflict, or to be expected to inflict, such chastisement? Are not the prevalence of this mode of punishment, and the associations it has created in the public mind, amongst the great weights which tend to drag down the teacher's occupation below the level of the other professions?

THE argument from necessity is answered by pointing to hundreds of schools all over America where the best of discipline prevails, and corporal punishment is utterly discarded. Of course, power must be given to dispose of incorrigibles by handing them over to parents, reformatories, etc. But there is